I N M E M O R I A M

ROBERT CHANCELLOR NESBITT

1868 - 1944

"A MAN GREATLY BELOVED"

Contributed by his Sisters - The Misses Nesbitt

Robert was only twelve years old when his father died quite suddenly. He was then at the Honiton Grammar School, preparing for Winchester. At once he seemed to realize his responsibilities to be a prop and stay to his bereaved mother and younger brother and sisters. From those early days his ambition was to make the very most of his life, and to give service in all spheres as they opened to him. By the advice of relatives he was removed to the City of London School so that he could live at home. There he advanced quickly under Dr. Abbott and made many lasting friendships. He looked forward to a University career where he might distinguish himself as his father had done, but at the age of eighteen his uncle, John Nesbitt Malleson, offered to give him his articles in the firm of Wadeson and Malleson, and the offer was accepted as being likely to lead more quickly to a profession, so he very reluctantly gave up the idea of Oxford and devoted his energies to becoming a lawyer.

His ability and great industry were soon recognized in the office, and at the end of his articles he became Managing Clerk and, not long afterwards, junior partner in the firm. When his uncle retired, and his son unexpectedly died in early middle life, Robert found himself head of "Wadeson and Malleson" before he was thirty years of age. People wondered whether he would be able to cope with the business. Not only, however, did he retain all the old clients, but continually added new and valuable ones, for all who came to him instinctively trusted him. His life became very strenuous for besides his legal work, his advice was frequently sought on all sorts of outside subjects.

To his family he was indispensable as leader, adviser and example. His devotion to his mother was beautiful, and he was, from boyhood onwards a most wonderful brother. He radiated sunshine and confidence wherever he appeared. Always he had the faculty of enjoying life, and getting pleasure out of small as well as great matters; he had a delightful sense of humour and never lost his boyish love of a joke. He entered into the joys as well as the sorrows of his friends, and expected and loved their sympathy in return. His lovely smile and genial manner were an index to his mind and character.

His interests in life were manifold and of all kinds. From the Village Cricket Club of which he was captain in his youth, and the Cycling successes in which he won and kept a world's record for speed and endurance, to great matters of Church and State, he gave absorbing attention. He loved nature, art and travel and above all humanity, God's highest creation. He adored little children and was never happier than in their company, and his personality held a charm for them, as well as for all who knew and loved him best, and who now can say, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."

* * * * *

S O M E T R I B U T E S

The Rt. Rev. and Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Fisher, D.D., Lord Bishop of London.

The death of Mr. R.C. Nesbitt takes from us one who has served the Diocese over a long period of years with conspicuous devotion and ability. He had wide interests, activities and responsibilities in various forms of public life; but in them all he was a churchman first and cared most for the services which he was able to render to the Church. Thirty years ago he was helping to frame the constitution of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England, and ever since he had been actively concerned in the developments of Central and Diocesan business. As a member of our Diocesan Conference, as a member of the Council of the London Diocesan Fund and for the last six years as its chairman, he gave to us without stint the fruits of his wisdom and of his long experience in legal and business affairs. To these he added the Christian virtues of friendship and thoroughness. He was rich in the multitude of his friends, and in every relation of life sought and gave friendship; he would undertake no task or office without spending himself to be a master of its detail.

His work for the Church found its climax and conclusion in his Chairmanship of the Paddington Estates Commission. These estates, which were formerly owned and developed by long leases by the See of London, were taken over many years ago with their leases by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Owing to certain conditions which exist in some parts of them, questions have constantly been asked about the legal and moral responsibility of the Commissioners in relation to them. While the Commissioners have often made clear that their powers and responsibility were severely limited by legal restrictions, there has never been any independent enquiry into the matter

A recrudescence of criticism led the London Diocesan Conference to set up last July a very strong commission to ascertain the facts of the matter and to make a full report. The report will be published shortly and should prove to be authoritative and final both in what it records and in what it recommends. It will be a very great gain to the Church to have a clear and complete statement upon a complicated and difficult question which has caused much misunderstanding. The report was finished just before Mr. Nesbitt's sudden death. All through the work of the Commission he had given his whole mind and energy to it. His friends feared that he was overtaxing his strength, and there can be no doubt that thereby he hastened his end. That devotion of himself to the service of the Church was typical of his whole life.

London Diocesan Leaflet, March 1944.

* * * * *

Bishop Winnington-Ingram. (Bishop of London, 1901-1939)

I knew Robert Nesbitt as a business man, as a friend, and as a fellow golfer.

I first got to know him when with great ability he was helping with the constitution of the Central Board of Church Finance and afterwards laying the foundations of our Church Finance system in the London Diocese, and I was always struck by his ability and the tact with which he managed a very difficult business. There was considerable "feeling" to be managed when he persuaded the supporters of the 'Bishop of London's Fund' to sink their individuality into the London Diocesan Fund. Then I was grateful for the help he gave us in the Council of the Fund, of which finally he became the Chairman.

As a friend, I stayed once or twice with him in his home; and it was in his home that he showed his real self. I don't think there could ever be a happier home than his. He was devoted to his wife and children, and they were devoted to him.

He was as charming to the outside world as he was at "Nobody's Friends" - the dining Club of which he became Secretary, and to the interests of which he devoted himself with characteristic energy.

Then busy as we both were, we often would arrange to get a game of golf together, especially at St. Andrews in September. He was not a first-rate golfer any more than I am myself, but we greatly used to enjoy our games together. Nothing brings out a man's character more than golfing with him, and Nesbitt's impenetrable good humour was just the same at golf as it was in his outside relations of life.

I feel I have lost a true friend in Robert Nesbitt. I cherish my best view of him in the Cotswolds, two years ago. There he was with his wife and daughter, as happy and cheerful as ever. They both came over to hear me preach in a neighbouring Church and I went to lunch with them the next day. I wrote to him of course at his wife's death. May they be as happy together in the next world as they were in this.

* * * * *

A LIFE OF SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP

Clifton Kelway. (Secretary of the Incorporated Church Building Society)

So many and varied were the activities and interests of his life - social, philanthropic, political, legal, financial and the rest - that it would be impossible to summarise or even mention them all in what can only be a comparatively brief tribute to Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, whose sudden and unexpected death has taken from us a true and greatly beloved friend. But, as the Bishop of London has truly said, in all his wide interests Nesbitt was a Churchman first and cared

most for the services which he was able to render to the Church. It is perhaps fitting, therefore, that one who like myself was for many years privileged to enjoy close friendship with him, and to be intimately associated with what may be termed his definite work in and for the Church, particularly in the Diocese of London, should contribute some record of his services in that direction.

Possessed of more than ordinary financial and legal knowledge, gained by long and practical experience, these valuable qualifications were always at the service of the Church when needed, either locally, in the Diocese, or generally, in a wider area. Thus it was that having served for many years as Vice-Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance in Rochester, in which Diocese he was at that time resident, a little later he rendered notable service in the wider field by bringing his legal and financial knowledge to bear in the framing of the constitution of that important body, the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. Another considerable work of his was the share that he had in the proceedings whereby the Royal Charter and Statutes which govern the disestablished Church in Wales were secured.

As to the London Diocese, the debt which it owes to this earnest and able layman is large and of long standing. When, nearly thirty years ago, the fusion of the East London Church Fund, the Bishop of London's Fund, and the London Diocesan Board of Finance was under consideration, the problems to be solved were many and difficult. That they were eventually solved satisfactorily was largely due to Nesbitt's tact and skill - a fact which was put on record in the tribute paid him in 1918 by Lord Justice Bankes and his other distinguished colleagues on the amalgamated body then brought into existence. Few events in his connection with the Fund probably gave him greater pleasure than that which occurred just twenty years later, when, on the proposal of the present writer, he who had done so much in the creation of the Fund was unanimously elected as its Chairman, a position which he occupied with unbroken constancy and ability to the close of his life.

These services, however, great and valuable as they were, by no means exhausted his work in and for the Church, Diocesan or generally. For over twenty years he was Hon. Treasurer and for some time Hon. Secretary of the London Diocesan Conference - positions which he willingly undertook again upon the death of Prebendary Wellard in 1942. In 1935 he was elected as a London representative in the Lay House of the Church Assembly, and in 1940 became the representative for London on the Central Board of Church Finance. In 1939 he was made Vice-Chairman of the Incorporated Church Building Society and in 1943 succeeded Sir Cecil Harcourt-Smith as its chairman, never missing a meeting of the Committee, in the proceedings of which he took the greatest interest.

Indeed, there seemed no limit to the willing response whenever calls were made upon him for added service to the Church. Even, for example, when stricken by the sudden death of his much - loved wife in 1942 - after a wonderful partnership of 47 years - he sought no rest, but, on the contrary, found relief in extending his efforts to serve the Church.

And so one is brought to the memory of what has proved to be his last, and perhaps his greatest, service to the Church - his chairmanship of the Paddington Estate Committee, the body appointed to report to the London Diocesan Conference on questions of peculiar difficulty and unpleasantness. Into this

task Nesbitt threw all his energy, counting no effort, physical or otherwise, too great in order to secure a satisfactory result from the work of the Committee. The success attained and embodied in its Report (issued shortly after his death) is largely due to the tact, skill and energy expended upon it by its Chairman, who in this service, as indeed in his long and self-sacrificing life, thought not of himself but only of how best the Church could be aided by his service. The Report, which was completed a few days before his death, is perhaps a fitting memorial to this devoted layman and an embodiment of that willing service to the Church of God which was typical of his whole life and is to us an example.

As to the joy of friendship which he possessed so abundantly and imparted to so many, this remains an abiding memory and will as long as life shall last. What it is may fitly be summed up in lines which were very dear to him, and which were exemplified in his own character:-

The joys of life are heightened by a friend;
The woes of life are lessened by a friend;
In all the cares of life we by a friend
Assistance find.

* * * * *

The Rt. Hon. Lord Hemingford, K.B.E.

Though I must have first come to know Nesbitt soon after 1896, it was not until he came into the House of Commons in 1922 that I came into close and intimate acquaintance with him. He was only the House of Commons for about two years, and during that time, while still carrying on the work in which he had previously been engaged, he undertook the chairmanship of an important Government Committee and membership of other committees connected with Parliamentary affairs: consequently in his short period of membership he made no great mark in the House of Commons: but he established even in that short time a reputation as an able and valuable member, and, as he always did, made many good friends among his colleagues.

A man of great ability, untiring industry, and a sound lawyer, he put to good use the experience he gained in his professional practice, in which he was the trusted adviser of many important bodies: he had proved his powers of usefulness to his fellowmen and was probably on the threshold of attaining a great position when at the comparatively early age of about 55 a tragic break-down in health, probably caused by over-work, put an end to a great career. For several years he was unable to carry on his many great activities, and although in course of time he made a wonderful recovery, I do not think he was ever again quite the same man. He had been obliged to retire from some of his positions, such as his membership of Parliament and of the Council of the Law Society: but no sooner had he recovered his physical strength and his naturally buoyant and happy disposition than he did his best to get back to useful work of the kind he loved.

I think the work he cared for most was that connected with his profession and the Church of England, and latterly for Guy's Hospital. Of all the consequences of his illness probably the one he felt most deeply was that it

robbed him of becoming the head of his profession: had he kept in good health, he would almost certainly have been elected President of the Law Society within about a year from the time he broke down.

His legal acumen and his knowledge of the legal and business affairs of the Church of England - and his great interest in them - are shown by two papers which he read at two of the annual Provincial Meetings of the Law Society, one in Sept. 1934, at Newcastle-on-Tyne on "Reform of the Church Courts," the other, at Nottingham, in Sept. 1936, entitled "The Tithe Settlement Reviewed." Both these subjects were thorny and difficult, but his papers show his capacity for dealing with them thoroughly and lucidly.

Like many other workers he thoroughly enjoyed his leisure: no mean athlete in his younger days, his golf and his chess were a great pleasure to him to the end of his life, and perhaps his outstanding characteristic was his genius for making great friendships.

During his later years he did much for the Church as a member of the House of Laity and of the London Diocesan Conference and his last greattask was his chairmanship of the Committee appointed by the latter body to investigate matters relating to the Paddington Estate and the connection therewith of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. I became a member of that Committee at his request, and the amount of hard work which he did astonished me: it is probable that this work on which he spent much time often sitting up till late at night, was the immediate cause of his sudden short illness and unexpected death: but he had completed the task and the proof print of the Report was ready when he was taken ill: he had arranged the final meeting of the Committee to approve the Report and died on the very day that meeting was held and the Report finally approved.

* * * * *

W.W. Elliot. (Sheriff-Deputy of the County of Berwickshire).

I had the good fortune to become acquainted some years ago with Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, and was mainly instrumental in arranging for his occupying the ancestral seat, Nisbet House, for a period, which I think was one of the happiest periods of his long and useful life.

To know Mr. R.C. Nesbitt was to love him, for a more kindly and loveable soul to meet one can hardly imagine. He loved the Scottish Borders and all connected therewith, which I think was one of the strongest proofs that he was the true head of the family - as he himself proved without a shadow of a doubt. He grudged no pains in tracing his descent from one of the noblest Border families which produced many notable and distinguished men, and he will rank among them. He put on record in that beautifully constructed book "Nisbet of that Ilk" a history of his family which will live long after him, and be of service to many historians as a book of reference.

Along with all his distinguished friends, I would like to be allowed to add my tribute to a real gentleman, and I for one will miss his presence in this world in very many ways.

* * * * *

R E S O L U T I O N S

PASSED ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT C. NESBITT
By the Organizations of which he was a Member.

The National Mutual Life Association of Australasia, Ltd.

RESOLVED: That the Directors have learned with very deep regret of the death of their valued Chairman, Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, and they desire to convey to his family their sincere sympathy and to express their own sense of personal loss.

The Directors desire to place on record their high appreciation of the sound judgment, wise advice and human sympathy which Mr. Nesbitt brought to bear upon all matters affecting the business of the Association throughout his long period of forty-two years as a Director, during the last twenty-nine of which he was Chairman of the Board. His wide experience of business affairs and as a lawyer was always freely placed at the service of the Association, in the direction of whose affairs he took an active part right to the end.

8th February, 1944.

The National Mutual Life Association of Australasia, Ltd., Melbourne.

The Board of Directors and General Manager have received with deep regret the news of the death of the Chairman and desire that an expression of their high appreciation of his long and faithful service as Chairman and Director for more than forty years and sympathy in this great loss should be communicated to his relatives.

29th January 1944, cable.

The Union Bank of Australia.

I am directed by the Chairman to convey to you the following Resolution which was passed today at a Meeting of the Directors of this Bank:-

> "The Directors learned with deep regret of the sudden death on 27th instant of their esteemed colleague, Mr. R.C. Nesbitt. He had been a Director of the Bank for nearly thirty years, during which long period his wide experience and sound judgment in all matters appertaining to the Bank's affairs were readily available to and greatly valued by the Board.
>
> "His loss will be sincerely felt by all his Colleagues who desire to tender their deep sympathy to his family."

A telegram from the General Manager in Melbourne was also received sending the deepest sympathy of himself and his staff on the death of R.C.Nesbitt.

I would also convey the deep sympathy of the Staff of the Bank in London, by whom the late Mr. Nesbitt was well known and most highly regarded.

F.H. McIntyre, Manager,
31st January, 1944.

The British Law Insurance Company Ltd.

RESOLVED: That the Board learns with the greatest regret of the death on the 27th instant of Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt and place on record their appreciation of the services he has rendered to the Company since his election as a Director in November 1901 and as its Deputy Chairman from July 1932 until his death on the 27th January, 1944, and express their sincere sympathy and condolence with the members of his family in the loss they have sustained.

Guy's Hospital

As Chairman of the Court of Governors of Guy's, I would ask you to accept on their behalf our sincere sympathy in the loss you have recently sustained on the death of your father.

For ten years Guy's has had the advantage of receiving from him the very valuable advice drawn from his vast and long experience of legal and other matters, and particularly as a Governor of the School he has done a great deal to maintain the Hospital in the position that it occupies to-day. He has also taken an active interest in the Hospital Estates, and more lately, in the plans for the rebuilding of Guy's after the war.

I would assure you that the gap which he leaves at Guy's will be difficult, if not impossible, to fill, and I and my fellow Governors extremely regret the passing of such an old friend and wise counsellor.

John E. Humphery, Chairman,
February, 1944.

The Council of the Law Society.

The Council deeply regret to have to record the death on the 27th January of Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, a former member of the Council.

On the 28th January the Council passed the following resolution:-

"The Council have heard with deep regret of the sudden death on the 27th January, 1944, of their former colleague, Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt. The Council take the opportunity once again to record their appreciation of the valuable services to the profession which Mr. Nesbitt rendered as a member of the Council from 1909 to 1926, and they tender to Mr. Nesbitt's family their deepest sympathy in their loss."

The Solicitors Benevolent Association.

The Directors of the Solicitors Benevolent Association have heard with the deepest regret of the death of their esteemed Colleague Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, who had been a Director from 1917, and also a Member of the Finance Committee. His year of office as Chairman from 1936 to 1937 was an outstanding one.

The Directors wish to place on record their appreciation of the devoted services and generous support he gave to the Association. They also desire to offer their very sincere sympathy to Mr. Robert M. Nesbitt and the family in their severe loss.

W. Maclaren Francis, Chairman.
2nd February, 1944.

The Incorporated Church Building Society.

At this, their first meeting since the death of their Chairman Mr. Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, on January 27th, the members of the Committees desire to record their deep sense of personal sorrow and their sympathy with the members of his family.

As a member of this Committee since 1934 and during the War, first as Deputy-Chairman and then as Chairman, his devotion to the Society has been unflagging and enthusiastic. Among the many good works to which so much of his energy and ability were devoted the operations of this Society have had for him a very special interest. By his death the members of the Committee feel that they have lost a friend and colleague who had endeared himself to them all, and one whose inspiring example of able and valuable service so unstintingly rendered to the work of the Church will be long and gratefully remembered.

Clifton Kelway, Secretary,
March 16, 1944.

The Rochester Diocese.

At the Finance Committee of the Rochester Diocese held today, our attention was drawn to the announcement in the Times of the death of Mr. Robert C. Nesbitt at the age of 75. I was asked by the Committee to convey to you our sincere and respectful sympathy in the loss you have sustained, and to let you know that the greatest services Mr. Nesbitt rendered to the Rochester Diocese are still gratefully remembered.

I have only recently come as Bishop to this Diocese, but I have often heard my leading laymen speak of Mr. Nesbitt in the highest terms and with warm regard.

Christopher Rothes,
Bishop of Rochester
January, 28th 1944.

From an Old Friend.

I was deeply grieved to read the news that my dear old friend "R.C." had passed away. We had known each other for nearly fifty years and first met when I was an articled clerk and he was managing clerk to Wadeson and Malleson, then in Austin Friars. For many years we met every Monday evening at the United Law Society after dinner, at "The Cock" and on countless other occasions, for I delighted in his company, as all his friends did.

He gave me great and encouraging assistance when I was called to the bar, and was one of the most loyal and generous of friends. He was robbed of the full rewards that he had won when he was at the zenith of his career, by the breakdown of his health, but after his recovery regained all his old zest for and enjoyment of life. All his old friends will miss him very greatly.

My deepest sympathy is with you and your family in your bereavement.

Albion H. Richardson.

From a Fellow Club Man.

He was the most amazing man. His aptitude for kindness and his way of helping lame dogs over stiles went far farther than usual. I shouldn't think that anyone appealed to him for help in vain, and his extraordinary kindness to those younger than himself had to be experienced to be believed. I owe him a very very great debt of gratitude..... In every way he was most tremendously likeable. It is dreadful to think he is gone and that we shall see him no more. He simply radiated cheerfulness combined with rare business capacity and his counsels will be missed in a great number of places.

You will have had hundreds of letters but I can assure you none written with a greater sense of real personal loss. He had been a real good friend to me.

Anthony Hickley.
January, 1944.

From a Former Legal Pupil.

.....He had the kindness to take me as an articled clerk just during those years when he was at the top of his form, so that I was in his office at a time when it must have been as interesting, and sometimes as exciting, as it can ever have been. In spite of his then enormous list of activities, he often found time to spare a few moments to me, and always treated me with a consideration and good-natured helpfulness which I shall never forget.

He had that remarkable and very engaging gift of being able on public occasions to refer to and include even the youngest and most unimportant of those around him as if they too were in the inner circle and as if he relied on them as much as other people did on him. This was always done very naturally, and in such a way as to make those others feel at ease. I have had one or two very nice and characteristic letters from him, even in quite recent years.

Bernard E. Elliman.
January, 1944.

* * * * *

A MAN OF GREAT ENDEAVOUR

by

Nora M. Bowles

His Secretary, 1916-1928

It is indeed an honour to be allowed to add a word of appreciation to the memory of the late Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, the subject of this Memoir.

I became his Secretary in 1916 and occupied that post for over twelve years. They were years of absorbing interest when he was at the height of his career, and I was privileged to witness many of his greatest achievements. So numerous and varied were his activities that in the small space now available it is impossible to attempt to mention but a fraction of them individually or in detail - in fact nothing short of a full biography could do justice to his quite remarkable life. His large practice in the firm of Wadeson & Malleson (later to be known as Markby Stewart & Wadesons) Solicitors in the City of London; his position as Chairman or Director of so many important Boards and Committees; his vast work for the Church; and his Parliamentary career when he represented the Chislehurst Division of Kent in the years 1922/4 - these are some of the main threads upon which the pattern of his public and professional life was woven during the years I was with him.

I so well remember the work involved when he acted for the Welsh Church in proceedings whereby the Royal Charter and Statutes now governing the Disestablished Church were granted, and again when he was legal adviser to the Archbishops' Committee which framed the constitution of the Central Board of Finance of the Church of England. Later on there was his outstanding achievement in re-adjusting the Church's finance in London which resulted in the formation of the present London Diocesan Fund of which he was Chairman from 1938 up to the date of his death. I like to recall the case of an important Arbitration in 1918 in which he was appointed the Sole Arbitrator. It occupied three full days in the hearing and such brilliant men as the then Mr. Douglas Hogg K.C. with Mr. Alexander Neilson and Sir John Simon with Mr. Stuart Bevan appeared for the Claimant and Respondents respectively. Mr. Nesbitt's Award in this case was an outstanding example of his clear thinking, his quick grasp of detail and marshalling of facts from which he could always so unerringly sift the relevant from the irrelevant.

During these years he was at various times Chairman or a Member of many highly important Committees. He was Chairman of the Special Training Grants Committee of the Ministry of Labour in 1921 and of the Ministry of Labour (Irish Court-Martial Officers) in 1922. He was a Member of the Lord Chancellor's Committee on Supreme Court Fees in 1920 and of the Lord Chancellor's Committee on Circuit Arrangements in 1922 - to mention only a few, and then came the invitation to stand for Parliament and represent the Chislehurst Division of Kent upon the retirement of Sir Alfred Smithers. It was by no means a safe seat, but he put his very heart and soul into the campaign, often making three or four speeches a night in widely different parts of the country, and giving himself unsparingly to the demands of the constituency, so that his successful election with a majority of over 5,500 was indeed a triumph and one which gave him the utmost pleasure and satisfaction.

In everything he undertook, whether great or small, one felt and saw his genius for handling men and affairs. Very early in my association with him I realised here was a man who unconsciously demanded one's best, but however great the task or long the day it was sheer joy to be working for him - indeed working "with" him was the impression he always conveyed, so appreciative was he of one's smallest efforts and so ready to share the rewards of praise and gratitude which came to him in no small measure.

I remember best his wise counsels, his amazing kindness and thoughfulness for others, his quiet humour, his understanding of human nature and above all his every youthful enthusiasm for life which he lived to the full - helped in all things by the lovely grace and charm of his beloved wife, so that together they brought happiness and the warmth of their dear friendship to so many: all these to me will be an abiding and ever blessed memory.

A GREAT ROCK

by

Janet Kerr Watson

His Secretary, 1932-1944

I am very glad to add my tribute to Robert Chancellor Nesbitt, in whose life and labours I have had the privilege of taking part since October 1932. I can thus remember and recall with gratitude the happy plans and projects he had the imagination to envisage and the industry to bring to pass. Often he would say how he loved work. His attitude towards it, and all the varied gifts of disposition and ability he brought to it, lifted it quite out of the dullness which work means to so many, - made of it almost a game to be played with zest, a race to be run and won.

He had great gifts - outstanding mental ability, a bright turn of mind, a happy knack of saying just the right word, of creating the right atmosphere and, as many know, was very appreciative in many ways of every bit of good within the day's events. He had a great desire to please and many delightful ways. All who served him loved him and it was amazing how friction would smooth out when he entered, for the warmth and good-will of his presence were immediately felt. He so enjoyed life and radiated that joie de vivre.

Although he took an energetic part in the activities of the charitable organizations with which he was associated, he took as much pleasure in his private givings. His friends, both young and old, were often the recipients of presents of grouse, Edinburgh rock or some such holiday remembrance. His associates in all walks of life never turned to him in vain for help, advice, or guidance in their private affairs. His subordinates in various companies often had a son or a daughter given a start on their career through his efforts on their behalf.

His resourcefulness and inventive turn of mind were revealed in many of his projects, as for instance, in what he termed "The Layman's Appeal", whereby he raised £1,000 for the London Diocesan Fund. The layman in question was an anonymous donor (actually it was himself) who donated £20 and invited his friends and fellow-laymen to do likewise. Again, in his year as Chairman of the Solicitors Benevolent Association, he raised another £1,000 by a series of letters of appeal each with an individual approach. Every week a new letter would be prepared and circulated, the final one addressed "To My Fellow Golfers."

The years he devoted to the research and compilation of the Nisbet Book were most happy ones. This study brought to light so much of interest in the history of his own family line and, indirectly, throughout a wider range, that although the work was begun in 1933, it was put aside while he embarked on other plans. - For example the construction and erection, in 1934, of a memorial to his famous kinsman, Alexander Nisbet the Herald (1657-1725); the preparation of speeches for the summer meetings of the Law Society, at Newcastle in 1934 "The Reform of the Church Courts" on which there was a leading article in the Times and a country-wide press; at Nottingham, in 1936 "The Tithe Settlement Reviewed" which again aroused discussion in the columns of the Times; and the reading of a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Modern Churchmen's Union at Oxford University in 1935.

During 1935 and 1936 he took up residence at the ancestral seat of the family, Nisbet House, Berwickshire, built by Sir Alexander Nisbet of that Ilk in 1630. He was thus able to undertake many pilgrimages in and around the Border country which aided greatly in the writing of the Nisbet book. It afforded opportunity, too, for many of the name of Nesbitt and Nisbet, both in this country and abroad, to visit the old home and take back with them to Australia, Canada and the United States glowing tributes to the old Castle of Nisbet and its charming host, in the person of the present-day descendant of Sir Alexander of that Ilk.

The writing of such a book, beginning in the early ages of Scotland's history, required much exploration and research, and time and time again revealed R.C.N's great drive, his unending patience and non-acceptance of defeat. Truly he demonstrated the family motto "I byd it". In this work, too, his ability to win co-operation was a great asset, and we were fortunate in the kindly helpfulness of librarians, curators of museums, photographers, antiquarians, in his kinsmen Nisbets who so generously gave access to family portraits, and archives, and perhaps most of all to his printers, who gave such exhaustive care and attention to the proofs and brought the work to a conclusion in the face of great difficulties in the dangerous days of 1940 and 1941.

He will be particularly remembered in Scotland for his contribution to heraldry. The erection of a memorial in Greyfriars Church Edinburgh, to Alexander Nisbet the Herald was, as John Buchan said in his speech at the unveiling, "An act of piety". It was that, but much more. It served to show not only respect for an ancestor but the thoughtful appreciation of industry and diligence which R.C.N. so often expressed, for the man he was honouring was a great scholar whose "System of Heraldry" is regarded as an institutional work in heraldic science. In the designing and execution of the Memorial Brass itself, which was entrusted to the Heraldic Painter of the Court of the Lord Lyon, Mr. Nesbitt with his usual care for detail supervised the work in all its stages.

Two years later, in 1936, as a result of his rambles in the Berwickshire countryside, he presented to Queen Mary's House, Jedburgh, a fine specimen of heraldic art in the Carre Panel. This was discovered with the help of Mr. W.W. Elliot in a dilapidated condition in a small village. It was purchased by Mr. Nesbitt, and at his expense restored by heraldic experts and loaned for exhibition to the house known as "Queen Mary's House," - in earlier days the home of Sir Thomas Ker of Ferniehurst.

Through the long line of Nisbets from the twelfth century onwards certain characters have stood out forcibly for their valiant deeds and energy. To those who have read the Nisbet book there will at once spring to mind Sir Alexander Nisbet, who, having lost his sons and spent his fortune in the Royalist cause, doggedly defended his home against his political opponents; Thomas Nisbet of York, diligent in building up business in the Merchant Adventurers and starting his sons and nephews on their careers; William Nisbet of Dirleton, Member of Parliament, a kindly family man, sending money to his soldier brother in Holland, bringing gifts to his children from London, making a detailed memorandum of his son's studies; Samuel Nesbitt, Governor of the Bahamas, who in 1812 had begun the writing of the family history.

Yet among them all Robert Chancellor Nesbitt will take his place as one of the most colourful and vivid personalities of that long line. Of his abilities and his good works many have spoken. To those who knew him intimately he will be remembered as a delightful companion, an inspiring worker, a true friend. As one has said "He was no ordinary man in any sense of the word," or in the words of his devoted Irish servant, "A man to himself, as it were." Finally, how many of his friends have found him what it was his hope to be, and a hope he richly fulfilled, - "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."